

Corps begins the annual summer refill of Lake Washington

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SEATTLE -- The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Seattle District has begun its annual practice of increasing the level of Lake Washington in preparation to meet myriad summer water use demands.

Each year, routinely on February 15, the process gets underway and normally terminates on June 1. However, each year has a different rate of fill and target elevations through the end of May based upon conditions at the time.

In April, while the Corps is still working to fill the lake, just as water release through the flumes for the salmon out-migration normally gets underway. Engineers target having a 21.95- foot pool, as measured at the Hiram Chittenden Locks in Ballard, roughly from May 1 through 31 with early May being most desirable. As a minimum, achieving 21.95 feet by May 31 is the target.

If possible, the operations staff will hold the pool at this elevation into June. There are occasions when that depth cannot be achieved due to the many water use requirements. For example, smolt flumes will again be installed at the Chittenden Locks in mid-April and must run all the time until the end of summer to ensure future salmon runs

Boat owners and other private and commercial maritime interests along Lake Washington shores and the Lake Washington Ship Canal should expect a gradual rise to approximately 21.95 by early to mid-May, targeting final refill of 22.0 feet by June 1. Owners who maintain their vessels in a boathouse, for instance, should closely monitor pool depth information.

More information on Lake Washington's status is available on the Corps' Seattle District river basin website at <http://www.nwd-wc.usace.army.mil/nws/hh/basins/lkwash.html>